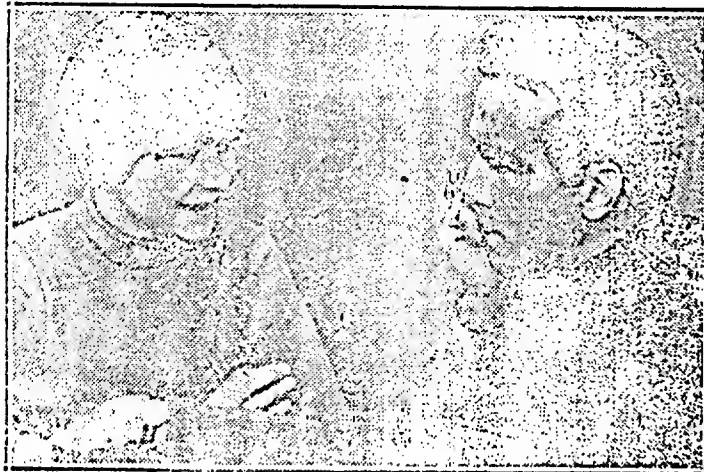


MOVIES

'Defector' Exciting, Tense Spy Drama

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Macha Meril and Montgomery Clift

By KATE CAMERON

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The stalemate that seems to have vitiated the cold war between the Iron Curtain countries and the Free West, occasionally evaporates when an agent or scientist defects from one side or the other and the war becomes hot for a short period of time. So it is in the case of "The Defector," a Seven Arts release, which had a triple opening at the Astor, Trans-Lux East and Murray Hill Theatres yesterday.

Photographed in Pathecolor, the dramatic action of the film is based on the screenplay by producer-director Raoul Levy and his collaborator, Robert Guen-

ette, who adapted Paul Thomas' novel, "The Spy," said to be inspired by a real case that involved a British scientist.

AS IN MOST espionage dramas, there are mysterious contacts and undercover goings-on, the intentions of which are not always clear, but the various tight situations in which Montgomery Clift, as the scientist, finds himself behind the Iron Curtain, are exciting.

Although Clift is put through some strenuous physical exercises in maintaining the character of the American scientist who reluctantly accepts an assignment to contact a Russian scientist in East Germany, and plays his role well, there are evident signs of his physical frailty. He died shortly after finishing the picture.

HARDY KRUGER, star of

German films, has an important role in the drama, as Professor Bower's watchdog, whose assignment from the Russian Communist chief in Leipzig, is to induce Bowers to defect to the East.

The American, however, eludes the Communists, makes his designated contact with a Leipzig doctor, receives the Russian's scientific material, which proves frustratingly useless, and is helped to escape being held in East Germany through the ingenuity of the doctor's pretty assistant.

LEVY HAS KEPT his characters on the move and although some of the action is fuzzy, he has managed to create an atmosphere of tension. Roddy McDowell plays the CIA agent who persuades Bowers to take on the espionage work, much against his will.

David Opatoshu makes the role of the Russian spy properly menacing and Macha Meril, extremely attractive as the girl who makes it possible for Bowers to get across the border into West Germany, will undoubtedly find herself in bigger and better roles on the screen.

"The Defector," a Seven Arts Pictures release. A PEF-Rhein Main co-production directed by Raoul Levy from a screenplay by Levy and Robert Guenette based on a novel by Paul Thomas. Presented at the Astor, Trans-Lux East and Murray Hill Theatres. Running time 1 hour, 39 minutes.

THE CAST:

Professor James Bower _____ Montgomery Clift
Connector Peter Heinzman _____ Hardy Kruger
CIA Agent Adam _____ Roddy McDowell
Frieda Hoffman _____ Macha Meril
Orlovsky _____ David Opatoshu
Ingrid _____ Christine Delarochie
Doctor Saltzer _____ Hannes Messemer
The Major _____ Karl Lieffen